**The Severed Hand 1AC**

**PART ONE IS MYTH OF CIVILIZATION.**

**Modern society has built organized cities, created complex economic systems, and invented advanced destructive technology all premised on an anthropocentric myth of progress. Our planet is dying; the engines that power our civilization are stuttering, yet, we continuously deny that we now live in an age of ecocide. Our attempts at a utopian world have miserably failed and over a century of hubris have resulted in a reckless and dangerous transcendence from nature. Kingsworth and Hine explain,**

Those who witness extreme social collapse at first hand seldom describe any deep revelation about the truths of human existence. What they do mention, if asked, is their surprise at how easy it is to die. The pattern of ordinary life, in which so much stays the same from one day to the next, disguises the fragility of its fabric. How many of our activities are made possible by the impression of stability that pattern gives? So long as it repeats, or varies steadily enough, we are able to plan for tomorrow as if all the things we rely on and don’t think about too care- fully will still be there. When the pattern is broken, by civil war or natural disaster or the smaller-scale tragedies that tear at its fabric, many of those activities become impossible or meaningless, while simply meeting needs we once took for granted may occupy much of our lives. What war correspondents and relief workers report is not only the fragility of the fabric, but the speed with which it can unravel. As we write this, no one can say with certainty where the unravelling of the financial and commercial fabric of our economies will end. Meanwhile, **[B]eyond the cities**, unchecked **industrial exploitation frays the** material **basis of life** in many parts of the world, **and pulls at the ecological systems which sustain it.** Precarious as this moment may be, however, an awareness of the fragility of what we call civilisation is nothing new. ‘Few men realise,’ wrote Joseph Conrad in 1896, ‘that their life, the very essence of their character, their capabilities and their audacities, are only the expression of their belief in the safety of their surroundings.’ Conrad’s writings exposed the civilisation exported by European imperialists to be little more than a comforting illusion, not only in the dark, unconquerable heart of Africa, but in the whited sepulchres of their capital cities. The inhabitants of that civilisation believed ‘blindly in the irresistible force of its institutions and its morals, in the power of its police and of its opinion,’ but their confidence could be maintained only by the seeming solidity of the crowd of like-minded believers surrounding them. Outside the walls, the wild remained as close to the surface as blood under skin, though the city-dweller was no longer equipped to face it directly. Bertrand Russell caught this vein in Conrad’s worldview, suggesting that the novelist ‘thought of civilised and morally tolerable human life as a dangerous walk on a thin crust of barely cooled lava which at any moment might break and let the unwary sink into fiery depths.’ What both Russell and Conrad were getting at was a simple fact which any historian could confirm: **[H]uman civilisation is a**n intensely **fragile construction.** It is built on little more than belief: belief in the rightness of its values; belief in the strength of its system of law and order; belief in its currency; above all, perhaps, belief in its future. **Once** that **belief begins to crumble**, the collapse of a civilisation may become unstoppable. That civilisations fall, sooner or later, is as much a law of history as gravity is a law of physics. **What remains [are]** after the fall is a wild mixture of cultural debris, confused and angry people whose certainties have betrayed them, and those **forces which were always there, deeper than the foundations of the city walls**: the desire to survive and the desire for meaning. **It is**, it seems, **our civilisation’s turn to experience** the inrush of the savage and the unseen; our turn to be brought up short by contact with untamed **reality. There is a fall coming.** We live in an age in which familiar restraints are being kicked away, and foundations snatched from under us. After a quarter century of complacency, in which we were invited to believe in bubbles that would never burst, prices that would never fall, the end of history, the crude repackaging of the triumphalism of Conrad’s Victorian twilight — Hubris has been introduced to Nemesis. Now **a familiar human story is being played out. It is the story of** an empire corroding from within. It is the story of **a people who believed**, for a long time, **that their actions did not have consequences**. It is the story of how that people will cope with the crumbling of their own myth. It is our story. This time, the crumbling empire is the unassailable global economy, and the brave new world of consumer democracy being forged worldwide in its name. Upon the indestructibility of this edifice we have pinned the hopes of this latest phase of our civilisation. Now, its failure and fallibility exposed, the world’s elites are scrabbling frantically to buoy up an economic machine which, for decades, they told us needed little restraint, for restraint would be its undoing. Uncountable sums of money are being funnelled upwards in order to prevent an uncontrolled explosion. The machine is stuttering and the engineers are in panic. They are wondering if perhaps they do not understand it as well as they imagined. They are wondering whether they are controlling it at all or whether, perhaps, it is controlling them. Increasingly, people are restless. The engineers group themselves into competing teams, but neither side seems to know what to do, and neither seems much different from the other. Around the world, discontent can be heard. The extremists are grinding their knives and moving in as the machine’s coughing and stuttering exposes the inadequacies of the political oligarchies who claimed to have everything in hand. Old gods are rearing their heads, and old answers: revolution, war, ethnic strife. Politics as we have known it totters, like the machine it was built to sustain. In its place could easily arise something more elemental, with a dark heart. As the financial wizards lose their powers of levitation, as the politicians and economists struggle to conjure new explanations, it starts to dawn on us that behind the curtain, at the heart of the Emerald City, sits not the benign and omnipotent invisible hand we had been promised, but something else entirely. Something responsible for what Marx, writing not so long before Conrad, cast as the ‘everlasting uncertainty and anguish’ of the ‘bourgeois epoch’; a time in which ‘all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned.’ **Draw back the curtain**, follow the tireless motion of cogs and wheels back to its source, **and you will find the engine driving our civilisation: the myth of progress**. The myth of progress is to us what the myth of god-given warrior prowess was to the Romans, or the myth of eternal salvation was to the conquistadors: without it, our efforts cannot be sustained. Onto the root stock of Western Christianity, the Enlightenment at its most optimistic grafted a vision of an Earthly paradise, towards which human effort guided by calculative reason could take us. Following this guidance, each generation will live a better life than the life of those that went before it. History becomes an escalator, and the only way is up. On the top floor is human perfection. It is important that this should remain just out of reach in order to sustain the sensation of motion. Recent history, however, has given this mechanism something of a battering. The past century too often threatened a descent into hell, rather than the promised heaven on Earth. Even within the prosperous and liberal societies of the West progress has, in many ways, failed to deliver the goods. Today’s generation are demonstrably less content, and consequently less optimistic, than those that went before. They work longer hours, with less security, and less chance of leaving behind the social back- ground into which they were born. They fear crime, social breakdown, overdevelopment, environmental collapse. They do not believe that the future will be better than the past. Individually, they are less constrained by class and convention than their parents or grandparents, but more constrained by law, surveillance, state proscription and personal debt. Their physical health is better, their mental health more fragile. Nobody knows what is coming. Nobody wants to look. Most significantly of all, **there is an underlying darkness** at the root of everything we have built. **Outside the cities, beyond the** blurring **edges of our civilisation, at the mercy of the machine** but not under its control, lies something that neither Marx nor Conrad, Caesar nor Hume, Thatcher nor Lenin ever really understood. **Something that Western civilisation** — which has set the terms for global civilisation—**was never capable of understanding, because to understand** it **would be to undermine**, fatally, **the myth** of that civilisation. **Something** upon **which** that thin crust of lava is balanced; which **feeds the machine** and all the people who run it, and **which they have all trained themselves not to see.** The myth of progress is founded on the myth of nature. The first tells us that we are destined for greatness; the second tells us that greatness is cost-free. Each is intimately bound up with the other. Both tell us that we are apart from the world; that we began grunting in the primeval swamps, as a humble part of something called ‘nature’, which we have now triumphantly subdued. **The** very **fact that we have a word for ‘nature’ is** [5] **evidence that we do not regard ourselves as part of it**. Indeed, our separation from it is a myth integral to the triumph of our civilisation. We are, we tell ourselves, the only species ever to have attacked nature and won. In this, our unique glory is contained. Outside the citadels of self-congratulation, lone voices have cried out against this infantile version of the human story for centuries, **[B]ut** it is only in the last few decades that its inaccuracy has become laughably apparent. We are the first generations to grow up surrounded by evidence that **our attempt to separate ourselves from ‘nature’ has been a grim failure**, proof not of our genius but our hubris. The attempt to sever the hand from the body has endangered the ‘progress’ we hold so dear, and it has endangered much of ‘nature’ too. The resulting upheaval underlies the crisis we now face. We imagined ourselves isolated from the source of our existence. **The fallout from this** imaginative **error is all around us:** a quarter of the world’s mammals are threatened with imminent extinction; **an acre and a half of rainforest is felled every second**; 75% of the world’s fish stocks are on the verge of collapse; **humanity consumes 25% more of the world’s** natural **‘products’ than the Earth can replace** — a figure predicted to rise to 80% by mid-century. Even through the deadening lens of statistics, we can glimpse the violence to which our myths have driven us. **And over it all looms** runaway **climate change**. Climate change, **which threatens to render all** human **projects** **irrelevant**; which presents us with detailed evidence of our lack of understanding of the world we inhabit while, at the same time, demonstrating that we are still entirely reliant upon it. Climate change, which highlights in painful colour the head-on crash between civilisation and ‘nature’; which makes plain, more effectively than any carefully constructed argument or optimistically defiant protest, how the machine’s need for permanent growth will require us to destroy ourselves in its name. Climate change, which brings home at last our ultimate powerlessness. These are the facts, or some of them. Yet facts never tell the whole story. (‘Facts’, Conrad wrote, in Lord Jim, ‘as if facts could prove anything.’) The facts of environmental crisis we hear so much about often conceal as much as they expose. We hear daily about the impacts of our activities on ‘the environment’ (like ‘nature’, this is an expression which distances us from the reality of our situation). Daily we hear, too, of the many ‘solutions’ to these problems: solutions which usually involve the necessity of urgent political agreement and a judicious application of human technological genius. Things may be changing, runs the narrative, but there is nothing we cannot deal with here, folks. We perhaps need to move faster, more urgently. Certainly we need to accelerate the pace of research and development. We accept that we must become more ‘sustainable’. But everything will be fine. There will still be growth, there will still be progress: these things will continue, because they have to continue, so they cannot do anything but continue. There is nothing to see here. Everything will be fine. We do not believe that everything will be fine. We are not even sure, based on current definitions of progress and improvement, that we want it to be. Of all humanity’s delusions of difference, of its separation from and superiority to the living world which surrounds it, one distinction holds up better than most: we may well be the first species capable of effectively eliminating life on Earth. This is a hypothesis we seem intent on putting to the test. We are already responsible for denuding the world of much of its richness, magnificence, beauty, colour and magic, and we show no sign of slowing down. For a very long time, we imagined that ‘nature’ was something that happened elsewhere. The damage we did to it might be regrettable, but needed to be weighed against the benefits here and now. And in the worst case scenario, there would always be some kind of Plan B. Perhaps we would make for the moon, where we could survive in lunar colonies under giant bubbles as we planned our expansion across the galaxy. But there is no Plan B and the bubble, it turns out, is where we have been living all the while. The bubble is that delusion of isolation under which we have laboured for so long. The bubble has cut us off from life on the only planet we have, or are ever likely to have. The bubble is civilisation. Consider the structures on which that bubble has been built. Its foundations are geological: coal, oil, gas — millions upon millions of years of ancient sunlight, dragged from the depths of the planet and burned with abandon. On this base, the structure stands. Move upwards, and you pass through a jumble of supporting horrors: battery chicken sheds; industrial abattoirs; burning forests; beam-trawled ocean floors; dynamited reefs; hollowed-out mountains; wasted soil. Finally, on top of all these unseen layers, you reach the well-tended surface where you and I stand: unaware, or uninterested, in what goes on beneath us; demanding that the authorities keep us in the manner to which we have been accustomed; occasion- ally feeling twinges of guilt that lead us to buy organic chickens or locally-produced lettuces; yet for the most part glutted, but not sated, on the fruits of the horrors on which our lifestyles depend. **We are the first generations born into** a new and unprecedented age — **the age of ecocide.** To name it thus is not to presume the outcome, but simply to describe a process which is underway. **The ground, the sea, the air,** the elemental backdrops to our existence — **all these our economics has taken for granted, to be used as a bottomless tip, endlessly able to dilute** and disperse **the tailings of our extraction**, production, consumption.

**Despite the attempts of the engineers to fix the machines of civilization through half-hearted measures of sustainability, and political reform, we are nevertheless headed for catastrophe. Our solutions to regulate extractive industries and consumption are merely a façade created by the ruling class to preserve their power and don’t actually address the anthropocentric mindset behind the “myth of progress.”**

**The myth of progress has secretly and silently produced our thoughts, and actions; it has crept into and slowly taken over our epistemology; it has dominated our politics and our ethics. Our leaders have made us forget that our stories are merely stories and that only we can undermine the myths of our civilization. Kingsworth and Hine 2 explain,**

If we are indeed teetering on the edge of a massive change in how we live, in how human society itself is constructed, and in how we relate to the rest of the world, then we were led to this point by the **[S]tories** we have told ourselves — above all, by the story of civilisation. This story has many variants, religious and secular, scientific, economic and mystic. But all **tell of humanity’s** original transcendence of its animal beginnings, our **growing mastery over** a ‘**nature’** to which we no longer belong, **and** **the** **glorious** **future** of plenty and prosperity which will follow when this mastery is complete. It is the story of human centrality, of a species destined to be lord of all it surveys, unconfined by the limits that apply to other, lesser creatures. **What makes this story** so **dangerous is that**, for the most part, **we have forgotten** that **it is a story**. It has been told so many times by those who see themselves as rationalists, even scientists; heirs to the Enlightenment’s legacy — a legacy which includes the denial of the role of stories in making the world. Humans have always lived by stories, and those with skill in telling them have been treated with respect and, often, a certain wariness. **Beyond the limits of reason, reality remains mysterious,** as incapable of being approached directly as a hunter’s quarry. **With stories,** with art, with symbols and layers of meaning, **we stalk those elusive aspects of reality that go undreamed of in our philosophy. The storyteller weaves the mysterious into the fabric of life,** lacing it with the comic, the tragic, the obscene, making safe paths through dangerous territory. **Yet as the myth of civilisation deepened its grip on our thinking,** borrowing the guise of science and reason, **we began to deny the role of stories**, to dismiss their power as something primitive, childish, outgrown. **The old tales** by which generations had made sense of life’s subtleties and strangenesses **were** bowdlerised and packed off to the nursery. Religion, that bag of myths and mysteries, birthplace of the theatre, was **straightened out into** **a framework of universal laws** and moral account-keeping. The dream visions of the Middle Ages became the nonsense stories of Victorian childhood. In the age of the novel, stories were no longer the way to approach the deep truths of the world, so much as a way to pass time on a train journey. It is hard, today, to imagine that the word of a poet was once feared by a king. Yet for all this, our world is still shaped by stories. Through television, film, novels and video games, we may be more thoroughly bombarded with narrative material than any people that ever lived. What is peculiar, however, is the carelessness with which these stories are channelled at us — as entertainment, a distraction from daily life, something to hold our attention to the other side of the ad break. There is little sense that these things make up the equipment by which we navigate reality. On the other hand, there are the serious **stories told by** economists, politicians, geneticists and corporate **leaders**. These **are not presented as stories** at all, **but** **as** direct **accounts** **of** **how the world is**. Choose between competing versions, then fight with those who chose differently. The ensuing conflicts play out on early morning radio, in afternoon debates and late night television pundit wars. **And yet,** for all the noise, what is striking is how much the opposing sides agree on: **all their stories are only variants of the larger story of human centrality, of our ever-expanding control over ‘nature’, our right to perpetual economic growth, our ability to transcend all limits**. So we find ourselves, our ways of telling unbalanced, trapped inside a runaway narrative, headed for the worst kind of encounter with reality. **In such a moment**, writers, artists, poets and storytellers of all kinds have a critical role to play. **Creativity remains the most uncontrollable** **of** human **forces**: without it, the project of civilisation is inconceivable, yet no part of life remains so untamed and undomesticated. **Words** and images can **change minds**, hearts, even the course of history. Their makers shape the stories people carry through their lives, unearth old ones and breathe them back to life, add new twists, point to unexpected endings. **It is time to** pick up the threads and **make the stories new**, as they must always be made new, starting from where we are. **Mainstream art** in the West **has long been about shock**; about busting taboos, about Getting Noticed. This has gone on for so long that **it has become common to assert that** in these ironic, exhausted, post-everything times, **there are no taboos left** tobust. **But there is one**. The last taboo is **the myth of civilisation**. It **is built upon the stories we have constructed about** our genius, our indestructibility, **our manifest destiny** as a chosen species. It is where our vision and our self-belief intertwine with our reckless refusal to face the reality of our position on this Earth. It has led the human race to achieve what it has achieved; and has led the planet into the age of ecocide. The two are intimately linked. We believe they must decoupled if anything is to remain. We believe that **artists** — which is to us the most welcoming of words, taking under its wing writers of all kinds, painters, musicians, sculptors, poets, designers, creators, makers of things, dreamers of dreams — **have a responsibility to begin the process of decoupling.** We believe that, **in the age of ecocide, the last taboo must be broken** — and that only artists can do it. **Ecocide demands a response** .

**The anthropocentric myth of progress is the original and foundational hierarchy that structures all other forms of oppression. The totalizing and oppressive domestication of the human began with the domination of the animal. The anthropocentric mindset of the myth of progress is the controlling impact of all domination because the subjugation of the human is based on the flawed belief that it is permissible to oppress that is considered “nonhuman.” Best explain,**

**Hierarchy emerged [when]** with the rise of agricultural society some ten thousand years ago. In the shift from nomadic hunting and gathering bands to settled agricultural practices, **humans began to establish** their **dominance** **over animals through** “domestication.” In animal **domestication** (often a euphemism disguising coercion and cruelty), humans began to exploit animals for purposes such as obtaining food, milk, clothing, plowing, and transportation. **As they gained** increasing **control** over the lives and labor power of animals, **humans bred them for desired traits** and controlled them in various ways, such as castrating males to make them more docile. **To** conquer, **enslave**, and claim **animals as their own property, humans developed** numerous technologies, such as pens, **cages**, collars, ropes, **chains, and branding irons. The domination of animals paved the way for the domination of humans**. The sexual subjugation of women, Patterson suggests, was modeled after the domestication of animals, such that men began to control women’s reproductive capacity, to enforce repressive sexual norms, and to rape them as they forced breeding in their animals. Not coincidentally, Patterson argues, slavery emerged in the same region of the Middle East that spawned agriculture, and, in fact, developed as an extension of animal domestication practices. In areas like Sumer, slaves were managed like livestock, and males were castrated and forced to work along with females. In the fifteenth century, **when Europeans began** the **colonization** of Africa and Spain introduced the first international slave markets, **the** metaphors, **models, and technologies used to exploit animal[s]** slaves **were applied with equal cruelty** and force **to** human **slaves. Stealing Africans from their native environment** and homeland, breaking up families who scream in anguish, **wrapping chains around** slaves’ bodies, shipping **them** in cramped quarters across continents for weeks or months with no regard for their needs or suffering, **branding their skin** with a hot iron **to mark them as property,** auctioning them as servants, breeding them for service and labor, exploiting them for profit, beating them in rages of hatred and anger, and killing them in vast numbers – **all these horrors** and countless others inflicted on black slaves **were developed** and perfected centuries earlier **through animal exploitation**. As the domestication of animals developed in agricultural society, humans lost the intimate connections they once had with animals. By the time of Aristotle, certainly, and with the bigoted assistance of medieval theologians such as St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, western humanity had developed an explicitly hierarchical worldview – that came to be known as the “Great Chain of Being” – used to position humans as the end to which all other beings were mere means. Patterson underscores the crucial point that **the domination of human** over human and its exercise through slavery, warfare, and genocide typically **begins with the denigration of victims.**

**The alternative is to engage in the process of uncivilized writing, a process by which each person demarcates himself or herself from civilization and the binaries of human-nonhuman by recognizing humanity for exactly what it is: a group of apes who had the hubris to think that their actions did not have any consequences; to have the audacity to believe that we are a superior form of life. The process of uncivilized writing is writing from the outside. It is only through the process of uncivilized writing that we can BURN civilization to the ground and let nature rise from the ashes. Kingsworth and Hine 3 explain,**

**That response is too important to be left to politicians**, economists, conceptual thinkers, number crunchers; too all-pervasive to be left to activists or campaigners. **Artists are needed**. So far, though, the artistic response has been muted. In between traditional nature poetry and agitprop, what is there? Where are the poems that have adjusted their scope to the scale of this challenge? Where are the novels that probe beyond the country house or the city centre? **What new form of writing has emerged to challenge civilisation itself?** What gallery mounts an exhibition equal to this challenge? Which musician has discovered the secret chord? If the answers to these questions have been scarce up to now, it is perhaps both because the depth of collective denial is so great, and because the challenge is so very daunting. We are daunted by it, ourselves. But we believe it needs to be risen to. We believe that art must look over the edge, face the world that is coming with a steady eye, and rise to the challengeof ecocide with a challenge of its own: an artistic response to the crumbling of the empires of the mind. This **[The] response [is]** we call Uncivilised art, and we are interested in one branch of it in particular: **Uncivilised writing**. Uncivilised writing is writing **which attempts to stand outside the human bubble and see us as we are: highly evolved apes** with an array of talents and abilities which we are unleashing without sufficient thought, control, compassion or intelligence. **Apes who have constructed a** sophisticated **myth of their own importance** with which to sustain their civilising project. **Apes whose project has been to** tame, to control, to subdue or to **destroy [and]** — **to civilise** the forests, the deserts, **the wild** lands and the seas, **to impose bonds on the minds of their own [so]** in order that **they might feel nothing when they exploit or destroy their fellow creatures**. Against the civilising project, which has become the progenitor of ecocide, **Uncivilised writing offers not a non-human perspective**—we remain human and, even now, are not quite ashamed — **but a perspective which sees us as one strand of a web rather than as the** first palanquin in a **glorious procession.** It offers an unblinking look at the forces among which we find ourselves. It sets out to paint a picture of homo sapiens which a being from another world or, better, a being from our own — a blue whale, an albatross, a mountain hare — might recognise as something approaching a truth. It sets out to tug our attention away from ourselves and turn it outwards; to uncentre our minds. **It is writing, in short, which puts civilisation** — and us — **into perspective. Writing that comes not**, as most writing still does, **from the self-absorbed** and self-congratulatory metropolitan centres of **civilisation but from somewhere on its wilder fringes. Somewhere woody and weedy** and largely avoided, from **where** insistent, **uncomfortable truths about ourselves drift in**; truths which we’re not keen on hearing Writing which unflinchingly stares us down, however uncomfortable this may prove. It might perhaps be just as useful to explain what Uncivilised writing is not. It is not environmental writing, for there is much of that about already, and most of it fails to jump the barrier which marks the limit of our collective human ego; much of it, indeed, ends up shoring-up that ego, and helping us to persist in our civilisational delusions. It is not nature writing, for there is no such thing as nature as distinct from people, and to suggest otherwise is to perpetuate the attitude which has brought us here. And it is not political writing, with which the world is already flooded, for politics is a human confection, complicit in ecocide and decaying from within. **Uncivilised writing** is more rooted than any of these. Above all, it **is determined to shift our worldview**, not to feed into it. **It is writing for outsiders.** If you want to be loved, it might be best not to get involved, for the world, at least for a time, will resolutely refuse to listen.

**PART TWO IS FRAMEWORK**

**Unless we completely rupture civilization by burning the factories that destroy our environment to the ground, the anthropocentric mindset will continue to blur our judgment and plague our thought. This requires a change in the way the judge evaluates the round. The judge now must act as the uncivilized writer that deconstructs truth and revealing the myth of our civilization. Ivory tower and abstract philosophical theorizing is bankrupt since it willfully separates debaters from the real world, rendering itself completely obsolete. It allows debaters to fiat utopian solutions to problems WITHOUT forcing them to engage with the mindsets that cause the problems in the first place. The ballot has the ability to endorse what is considered truthful in this round by virtue of picking a winner. Because of this, the judge must assume the role of the intellectual, which has the primary obligation to deconstruct the myths that serve as the lynchpin to our civilization. Foucault explains,**

It seems to me that what must now be taken into account in **[T]he intellectual is not the ‘bearer of universal values.’** **Rather**, it’s **the person** occupying a specific position – but **who**se specificity **is linked**, in a society like ours, **to** the general functioning of an apparatus of **truth**. In other words, the intellectual has a three-fold specificity: that of his class position (whether as petty-bourgeois in the service of capitalism or ‘organic’ intellectual of the proletariat); that of his conditions of life and work, linked to his condition as an intellectual (his field of research, his place in a laboratory, and political and economy demands to which he submits of against which he rebels, in the university, the hospital, etc.); lastly, the specificity of the politics of truths in our societies. And **it’s with this** last **factor that [their]** his **position can take on** a general **significance** and that his local, specific struggle can have effects and implications which are not simply professional or sectorial. The intellectual can operate and struggle at the general level of that regime of truth which is so essential to the structure and functioning of our society. **There is a battle** ‘for truth,’ or at least ‘**around truth’** – it being understood once again that by truth I do not mean ‘the ensemble of truths which are to be discovered and accepted,’ but rather ‘the ensemble of rules according to which the true and false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true’, it being understood also that it’s not a matter of a battle ‘on behalf’ of the truth, but of a battle about the status of truth **and the** economic and political **role it plays**. It is necessary to think of the political problems of intellectuals not in terms of ‘science’ and ‘ideology’, but in terms of ‘truth’ and ‘power’. And thus the question of the professionalization of intellectuals and the division between intellectual and manual labour can be envisaged in a new way. All this must seem very confused and uncertain. Uncertain indeed, and what I am saying here is above all to be taken as a hypothesis. In order for it to be a little less confused, however, I would like to put forward a few ‘propositions’ – not firm assertions, but simply suggestions to be further tested and explained. **‘Truth’ is** to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. ‘Truth’ is **linked** in a circular relation **with** system of **powers which** produces and **sustain** it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. **A regime** of truth. This regime is not merely ideological or superstructural; it was a condition of the formation and development of capitalism. And it’s this same regime **which [is], subject to** certain **modifications**, operates in the socialists countries (I leave open here the question of China, about which I know little). **The** essential political problem for the **intellectual** **is not to criticize** the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or **to ensure that his own** scientific **practice** is accompanied by a correct ideology, **but** **that of ascertaining the possibility of** constitution a **new** politics of **truth. The problem is** not changing people’s consciousness’s – or what’s in their heads – but **the** political, economic, institutional regime of the **production of truth**. **It’s** not **a matter** of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but **of detaching the power of truth from** the forms of **hegemony**, social economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time.

**Engaging in this deconstructive thought is a pre-requisite to ALL other forms of thought because self-righteous truths prevent us from distinguishing value, thereby corrupting the meaning of truth. If truth is to have any meaning, and our discourse is to have significance the judge must use the ballot to combat judgments. Deleuze explains,**

Combat is not a judgment of God, but the way to have done with God and with judgment. **No one develops through** **judgment, but through a combat that implies no judgment**. Existence and judgment seem to be opposed on five points: cruelty versus infinite torture, sleep or intoxication versus the dream, vitality versus organization, the will to power versus a will to dominate, combat versus war. What disturbed us was that in renouncing judgment we had the impression of depriving ourselves of any means of distinguishing between existing beings, between modes of existence, as if everything were now of equal value. But is it not rather **[J]udgment** that **presupposes preexisting criteria** (higher values), criteria that preexist for all time (to the infinity of time), **so** **that it can neither apprehend what is new** in an existing being, **nor** even **sense** **the creation of a mode of existence?** Such a mode is created vitally, through combat, in the insomnia of sleep, and not without a certain cruelty toward itself: nothing of all this is the result of judgment. **Judgment prevents the emergence of any new modes of existence. For** the latter **creates itself through its own forces**, that is, through the forces it is able to harness, **and is valid in and of itself** inasmuch as it brings the new combination into existence. Herein, perhaps, lies the secret: to bring into existence and not to judge. If **it so disgusting to judge**, it is **not because everything is of equal value, but** on the contrary **because what has value can be** made or **distinguished only by defying judgment. What expert judgment, in art, could ever bear on the work to come?**  It is not a question of judging other existing beings, but of sensing whether they agree or disagree with us, that is, whether they bring forces to us, or whether they return us to the miseries of war, to the poverty of thee dream, to the rigors of organization. As Spinoza had said, it is a problem of love and hate and not judgment; “my soul and body are one...What my soul loves, I love. What my soul hates, I hate...All the subtle sympathizing’s of the incalculable soul, from the bitterest that to passionate love.” This is not subjectivism, since to pose the problem in terms of force, and not in other terms, already surpasses all subjectivity.

**The criticism is a disad to theory. Theory is an example of the academic procedural dogma that inhibits creative thinking and unique problem-solving strategies. Engaging debate on debate’s terms to weed out arguments that challenge its assumptions feeds into an ever-growing system of censorship that controls who is allowed to access certain knowledge – this means the aff’s deconstruction of truth outweighs fairness because it militarizes the debate space and prevents fluid thought. Bleiker explains,**

Bleiker 2000 [Roland, Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland, *Popular Dissent, Human Agency, and Global Politics*, pgs 18-19] **Gazing beyond the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge is necessary to open up questions of traversal dissent and human agency. Academic disciplines**, by virtue of what they are, **discipline the production and diffusion of knowledge. They establish the rules of intellectual exchange and define the methods**, techniques, and instruments **that are** considered **proper for this purpose. Such conventions not only suggest on what ground things can be studied legitimately, but also decide what issues are worthwhile** to be assessed in the first place. **Thus, as soon as one addresses academic disciplines on their own terms, one has to play according to the rules of a discursive “police” which is reactivated each time one speaks.** In this case, **[O]ne cuts off any innovative thinking spaces that exist on the other side of this margin.**

**Thus, promoting my forms of critical education are key; promoting fairness to exclude arguments that attempt to change the mindsets that underpin our civilization are the very same totalitarian censorship tools used in the real world. Thus, I affirm.**